

2 May 1988

Mr. Charles Cummings
The Public Library of
Newark, New Jersey

Dear Mr. Cummings:

Miss Elizabeth Bathgate was a member of one of the original families settling in the Roseville section of Newark. Bathgate Place is named after them. She and sister Margaret lived in a mansion at 254 Roseville Avenue, near Park Avenue, owned by brother James.

When my sister bought the mansion on extensive grounds at 88 N 6th Street, extending to 7th Street, I knew it had been the rectory of the Roseville Presbyterian Church, and had been occupied by the first minister, Rev. Pingry. On the grounds to the rear of the mansion, a building was erected with classrooms and dormitories to house students who lived out of town; this became the original PINGRY SCHOOL FOR BOYS.

Miss Elizabeth Bathgate and I held lengthy conversations relating to Newark history. I asked her to write the history of the Pingry mansion. The accompanying seven hand-written pages relate much history of Newark and its Roseville section dating back to almost the founding days. It is an important addition to the archives.

Very truly yours,

Wm. A. Berg

The house numbered 88 north 6th street, marks the turning point in the history of the section of Newark later to be called Roseville.

A few years before 1849 or perhaps but a year, the house, being the home, formerly, of Mrs Ora Holden, was acquired - with its farm I believe - by Mr George A. Van Wageningen, a lumber merchant, whose fine old frame home, situated on a knoll to the east of Mrs Holden's home has long since been destroyed. Mrs Holden's house is the only house, I have been told, of that period, which has remained unchanged in its outward aspect, in the entire city.

The latter years of the 1840's were marked by the transition from the age old farm-sustaining way of life to the age of industrial life. The few people having small or fairly large farms, gathered within or around the three old Indian trails called today, Orange street, Roseville Avenue and West Market street, were still utterly unconsidered, and

2 unknown by the citizens of Newark, so unknown, that in 1847, when a map was made of the city, the land of the Boiling Springs Lane was no more considered than the forests of which it was the center. True, the Boiling Springs Lane (the present Roseville avenue) was well known because of the Boiling Springs to which it gave access, and the Cherry Tree Inn on Orange road was patronized by the many visitors to the Springs but realization that a community, with a distinct and definite character and life of its own was in operation within the forest, which was as yet uncharted, never apparently occurred to anyone outside its borders.

There were but three homes farther north than Orange road: two on the present Roseville avenue, between n. 7th & 6th avenues and one, the Overseer's home, of John T. Baldwin's farm, bordering the land of the present n. 5th street, but the life of the community, developed around the three old trails, then called Orange road, Boiling Springs Lane, and the Orange Turnpike or the Turnpike, did not

3/ extend to include those homes.

In 1949 ^{each of} there were, approximately, 20 adult members of the three churches of the Presbyterian, Methodist and Episcopal persuasions and but a very few adults who were affiliated with no church.

The little group, of varying degrees of education, had made united effort during the years, to have and to hold, a standard of living where character was the primary consideration. That standard was threatened by the new era coming to birth, for the 1830^s and 40^s were the closing ^{years} of one era in world history, and the opening of a new cycle was being evolved even as today.

Which way was the section going? the small groups of church members, having short services, by themselves, in private homes with Sunday schools for their children, after the services were ^{over}, no longer ^{were} content without leadership and inspiration. They felt they were ⁱⁿ back waters of life, so to speak. Their Physician, Dr. Dodridge was old and rapidly failing in health. Mr. David Lomkins, was hoping to sell his farm as soon as he could, I say hoping, for farms ^{for personal living on the} not used, outskirts of the city were a real

4/ liability at that time so great was the urge of the city.

The people of the unnamed section, used to cooperation seeking for the benefit of all rather than the aggrandizement of the few, were galvanized into action when realization came to a few ^{people} that they must do something to advance or be engulfed by apathy. Those few to take the action, which turned the tide from a blighted area, chanced to be Presbyterians, who, better able financially to lead than any members of the other church groups, gathered together to pray earnestly for light to know what they could or should do.

Mr. Van Wageningen said: in this time of depression he might loan the Holden house for a parsonage and school for small boys, as was being done in other villages to increase the small stipend offered a minister, if he could have some assistance offered in the necessary repairs as they occurred - the offer to so do was responded to at once, and Mr. Aaron Beck promptly offered land for a church building and future

5/ parsonage. Altho offers followed in rapid succession - a horse, buggy, cow, pig, chickens, wood for heating, and the cutting of that wood, supplies of hay, oats and fodder and arrangements made by the ladies for meetings to make quilts and rugs and to plan for stacking of pantry shelves and repairing of furniture from attics and store rooms.

In the city, while fine furniture and carpets were available, the great majority of people lived well on supplies from their adjoining farms, but little money was in actual circulation to supply a living for another family than their own. This was a problem requiring serious consideration, but two, of the more financially assured men, guaranteed to supplement the loss - if any could not pay the amount they then believed they could afford - and a vote was taken and passed upon to call a minister. My grandfather, recently come

b from the city, having a wide circle of friends in many walks of life, was given the work of calling a pastor of his choosing.

Mr. Truery - a young man having a small church and a boys school in the village of Fishkill, New York with small sons of his own, accepted the call and proved so very successful as a teacher that in an astonishingly short time he was installed in a large building on Riverville Avenue and the school became a boarding school, and a day school for many boys of Newark. This greatly increased the advantages for the sons of the little ^{group} living in the land of the Boiling Springs Canal, which did not receive so much as a name until 1855.

All this story of the little spot does here reference to the house so graciously used for the good of all - first and foremost, because there was no other building in the neighborhood available for such use - no church organizations could be put into operation without a building where a pastor

7 could not only live, but hold church services until a church building could be erected - and secondly, the generous offering of one earnest group so inspired the other two groups into action, that by 1852 they also had church buildings erected or in process of erection. The changing world was faced by the high standards, developed so as to take full advantage of all the new world had to offer.

People responding to these standards rapidly moved into the little place and those not so responding, as quickly removed or were disinclined to make their home there.

As the spirit of the settlement of a land lingers long after the people forming the settlement have been forgotten, so does the framework of a dwelling hold within its walls the atmospheric endowment of its early years, long after the people, their names and accomplishments have passed from memory. A house can be as a benediction if its early days have been so lighted, it is a loss to coming generations to destroy it from their midst and a costly thing to preserve it.